

What Is Claimed Is:

1. A method for processing an electronic mail message comprising the steps of:
 - (a) receiving in an electronic mail receiving system an electronic message having an address, said address having an electronic mail receiving system domain with a recipient name encoded therein; and
 - (b) processing said electronic message in accordance with processing instructions associated with said recipient name.
2. The method of claim 1, wherein said recipient name is a sub-domain of said electronic mail receiving system domain, said processing step including the step of processing said sub-domain.
- 10 3. The method of claim 1, wherein said processing includes the step of routing said electronic message to an e-mail server associated with said recipient name.
4. A method for processing an electronic mail message comprising the steps of:
 - (a) accepting a request for e-mail server address information for an electronic message having an address, said address having an electronic mail receiving system domain with a recipient name encoded therein;
 - (b) providing an e-mail server address for said recipient name in response to said request;
 - (c) accepting said electronic message at said e-mail server address.
- 15 5. The method of claim 4, wherein said recipient name is a sub-domain of said electronic mail receiving system domain, and wherein said step of providing an e-mail server address includes the steps of:

(a) obtaining sub-domain address information for said sub-domain of said electronic mail receiving system domain;

(b) providing said sub-domain address as said e-mail server address.

6. The method of claim 5, wherein said step of obtaining said sub-domain address 5 information includes the steps of requesting an address from a DNS server and receiving a sub-domain address from said DNS server in response to said request.

7. The method of claim 4, wherein said address includes a source identifier, further comprising the steps of:

(a) examining the source identifier included in said address;

10 (b) processing said electronic message based on processing instructions associated with said source identifier.

8. The method of claim 7, wherein said address includes a local-part, said source identifier being encoded in said local-part, and wherein said step of examining said source identifier includes the step of retrieving said source identifier from said local-part of said address.

15 9. The method of claim 8, wherein said step of processing said electronic message includes the steps of:

(a) opening a database;

(b) determining if an entry associated with said source identifier exists in said database;

20 (c) if said entry exists, processing said electronic message in accordance with processing instructions contained in said entry;

(d) if said entry does not exist, processing said electronic message in accordance with a default processing instruction.

10. The method of claim 9, wherein said recipient name is a sub-domain of said electronic mail receiving system domain, and wherein said step of providing an e-mail server address includes the 5 steps of:

(a) obtaining sub-domain address information for said sub-domain of said electronic mail receiving system domain;

(b) providing said sub-domain address as said e-mail server address.

11. The method of claim 10, wherein said step of obtaining said sub-domain address 10 information includes the steps of requesting an address from a DNS server and receiving a sub-domain address from said DNS server in response to said request.

12. A system for receiving and processing an electronic message, comprising:
an electronic message receiver for receiving an incoming electronic message, said message having an address which includes an electronic mail receiving system domain portion having a recipient 15 name encoded in therein;
an electronic mail receiving system domain associated with said system;
processing instruction storage for maintaining processing instructions for said incoming electronic message based on said recipient name;
a message processor for processing said incoming electronic message in accordance with said 20 processing instructions.

13. The system of claim 12, wherein:

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said recipient name is a sub-domain of said electronic mail receiving system domain; and
said processing instruction storage includes instructions associated with said sub-domain.

14. The system of claim 12, wherein:

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said system includes an e-mail server associated with said recipient name; and

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said message processor includes an e-mail server address request processor for providing e-mail server address information in response to a request for an e-mail server address associated with said recipient name.

15. The system of claim 14, wherein said recipient name is a sub-domain of said electronic mail receiving system domain and said e-mail server address request processor is a DNS server.

10 16. The system of claim 14, wherein said address of said electronic messages includes a

local-part and a source identifier encoded in said local-part, and wherein said e-mail server includes:

process instruction storage for maintaining processing instructions based on said source

identifier for electronic messages received by said e-mail server; and

an electronic message processor for processing electronic messages received by said e-mail

15 server in accordance with said processing instructions.

17. The system of claim 16, wherein said process instruction storage is a database.

18. The system of claim 16, wherein said process instruction storage is a text database.